CLAIMS:

1. A system for performing one or more tests on a hearing prosthesis, the system being usable at least in part by the recipient of the prosthesis, the system comprising:

a computer that processes software instructions and outputs signals in response to said instructions;

a prosthesis interface means that provides transfer of signals from said computer to the prosthesis and/or from the prosthesis to the computer; and

an interface that allows the recipient of the prosthesis to at least partially control at least some aspect of the tests performed on the prosthesis that is interfaced with the computer.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the computer is a stand alone computer adapted to perform one or more tests on the hearing prosthesis.

3. The system of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the computer is located in a clinic for use by the recipient when visiting the clinic.

4. The system of claim 3 wherein the computer is operable to provide results of the tests for immediate assessment by a clinician.

5. The system of claim 3 or claim 4 wherein the computer is operable to store results of the tests for later assessment.

6. The system of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the computer is at a location remote from a clinician of the recipient.

7. The system of claim 6 wherein the computer is located at the recipient's home.

8. The system of claim 6 or claim 7 wherein the computer is operable to store results of the tests on a storage means for forwarding to the clinician of the recipient.

9. The system of claim 8 wherein the storage means is in the prosthesis.

10. The system of claim 9 wherein the storage means is a portable storage means, to be physically forwarded to the clinician of the recipient.

11. The system of claim 10 wherein the portable storage means is a magnetic disc.

12. The system of any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein the computer is operable to obtain software instructions from the hearing prosthesis.

13. The system of any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein the computer is operable to deliver results of the test electronically to a computer of a clinician of the recipient.

14. The system of claim 13 wherein the electronic delivery is provided by the Internet.

15. A system for performing one or more tests on a hearing prosthesis, the system comprising:

a first computer that processes a set of software instructions and outputs signals in response to said instructions;

a prosthesis interface means that provides a transfer of signals between said first computer and the hearing prosthesis; and

a second computer that provides said set of software instructions to said first computer to control at least some aspects of the tests performed on the hearing prosthesis that is interfaced with said first computer.

16. The system of claim 15 wherein the first computer is located remotely from a clinician of the recipient.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein the first computer is located in a home of the recipient.

18. The system of any one of claims 15 to 17, wherein the first computer is operable to deliver results of the test electronically to the second computer.

19. The system of claim 18 wherein the electronic delivery is provided by the Internet.

20. The system of any one of claims 15 to 19 wherein the second computer is a computer of a clinician of the recipient.

21. The system of claim 18 or claim 19 wherein the second computer is operable to store electronically delivered results of the tests.

22. The system of any one of claim 15 to 21 wherein the second computer is operable to provide a set of instructions to the first computer instructing the first computer to perform one or a series of tests on the hearing prosthesis.

23. The system of claim 22 wherein the second computer is operable to generate the set of instructions to the first computer based on test results received from the hearing prosthesis.

24. The system of claim 22 or claim 23 wherein the second computer is operable to modify the set of instructions to the first computer based on test results received from the hearing prosthesis.

25. The system of any one of claims 15 to 24 wherein the first computer operates as a dumb terminal under the control of the second computer.

26. The system of any one of claims 15 to 24 wherein the first computer stores test software, and is operable to operate the test software upon receipt of a trigger signal from the second computer.

27. The system of any one of claims 15 to 26, further comprising a recipient interface interoperable with the first computer, enabling recipient control of some characteristics of tests carried out on the recipient's prosthesis.

28. The system of claim 27 wherein the recipient interface comprises a graphical user interface displayed on a screen of the first computer.

29. The system of claim 27 or claim 28 wherein the recipient interface presents instructions as to required steps to be performed by the recipient in carrying out a test.

30. The system of claim 29 wherein the instructions comprise instructions as to how the recipient may start or stop a test.

31. The system of any one of claims 15 to 30 wherein the second computer comprises an application enabling the recipient's clinician to configure an appropriate set of test instructions for transmission to the first computer.

32. The system of claim 31 wherein the application presents a graphical user interface on a screen of the second computer to facilitate the recipient's clinician's configuration of the set of test instructions.

33. The system of any one of claims 15 to 32 wherein the prosthesis interface means comprises an external port of the first computer capable of being connected to the hearing prosthesis.

34. The system of any one of claims 15 to 33 further comprising an input device to receive recipient control instructions.

35. A method of testing a hearing prosthesis, the method comprising:

providing a first computer that processes software instructions and outputs signals in response to said instructions;

transferring the signals from the first computer to the prosthesis; and

providing an interface that allows the recipient of the prosthesis to at least partially control at least some aspect of the tests performed on the prosthesis that is interfaced with the first computer.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein the first computer is a stand alone computer.

37. The method of claim 35 or claim 36, wherein the first computer is provided in a clinic for use by the recipient when visiting the clinic.

38. The method of claim 37, further comprising the step of providing results of the tests for immediate assessment by a clinician.

39. The method of claim 37 or claim 38, further comprising the step of storing results of the tests for later assessment.

40. The method of claim 35 or claim 36, wherein the first computer is provided at a location remote from a clinician of the recipient.

41. The method of claim 40 wherein the first computer is provided at a home of the recipient.

42. The method of claim 40 or claim 41, further comprising storing results of the tests on a storage means and forwarding the storage means to the clinician of the recipient.

43. The method of any one of claims 35 to 42 further comprising obtaining the software instructions from the hearing prosthesis.

44. The method of any one of claims 35 to 43, further comprising electronically transmitting results of the tests to a computer of a clinician of the recipient.

45. A method of performing one or more tests on a hearing prosthesis, the method comprising:

providing a first computer that processes a set of software instructions and outputs signals in response to said instructions;

transferring signals between said first computer and the hearing prosthesis; and

providing a second computer that provides said set of software instructions to the first computer to control at least some aspect of the tests performed on the hearing prosthesis by the first computer.

46. The method of claim 45 wherein the first computer is provided at a location remote from a clinician of the recipient.

47. The method of claim 46 wherein the first computer is located at a home of the recipient.

48. The method of any one of claims 45 to 47 further comprising the first computer electronically delivering results of the tests to the second computer.

49. The method of any one of claims 45 to 48 further comprising the first computer electronically storing results of the tests.

50. The method of any one of claims 45 to 49 further comprising the second computer providing a set of instructions to the first computer instructing the first computer to perform one or a series of tests on the hearing prosthesis.

51. The method of claim 50 further comprising the second computer generating said set of instructions to the first computer based on test results received from the hearing prosthesis.

52. The method of claim 50 or claim 51 further comprising the second computer modifying the set of instructions to the first computer based on test results received from the hearing prosthesis.

53. The method of any one of claims 45 to 52 further comprising the first computer operating as a dumb terminal under the control of the second computer.

54. The method of any one of claims 45 to 52 further comprising the first computer storing test software, and operating said test software upon receipt of a trigger signal from the second computer.

55. The method of any one of claims 45 to 54 further comprising providing a recipient interface interoperable with the first computer, enabling recipient control of some characteristics of tests carried out on the recipient's prosthesis.

56. The method of claim 55 wherein the recipient interface comprises a graphical user interface displayed on a screen of the first computer.

57. The method of claim 55 or claim 56 further comprising the recipient interface presenting instructions as to required steps to be performed by the recipient in carrying out a test.

58. The method of claim 57 wherein the instructions comprise instructions as to how the recipient may start or stop a test.

59. The method of any one of claims 45 to 58 further comprising a clinician configuring a set of test instructions by use of an application of the second computer, for transmission to the first computer.

60. The method of claim 59 further comprising the application of the second computer presenting a graphical user interface on a screen of the second computer to facilitate the clinician's configuration of the set of test instructions.

61. The method of any one of claims 45 to 60, further comprising providing an input device to receive recipient control instructions.

62. A computer program configured to make a computer perform one or more tests on a hearing prosthesis, the computer program being operable at least in part by the recipient of the hearing prosthesis, the computer program comprising:

code for generating instructions to the prosthesis in carrying out a test;

code for transferring the instructions to the prosthesis;

code for implementing an interface that allows the recipient of the prosthesis to at least partially control at least some aspect of the tests performed on the prosthesis.

63. The computer program of claim 62 further comprising code for receiving test results from the prosthesis.

64. The computer program of claim 63, further comprising code for forwarding test results received from the prosthesis for immediate assessment by a clinician.

65. The computer program of claim 63 or claim 64, further comprising code for storing test results for later assessment.

66. The computer program of claim 65, wherein the code for storing the test results is operable to store the test results on a portable storage means for forwarding to the clinician of the recipient.

67. The computer program of claim 66 wherein the portable storage means is in the prosthesis.

68. The computer program of any one of claims 62 to 67 further comprising code for obtaining software instructions from the hearing prosthesis.

69. The computer program of any one of claims 62 to 68, further comprising code for delivering test results electronically to a computer of a clinician of the recipient.

70. A computer program for facilitating performance at least in part by a recipient of a hearing prosthesis of one or more tests on the hearing prosthesis, the computer program comprising:

code for receiving clinician inputs to define a nature of the one or more tests;

code for generating prosthesis instructions for carrying out the test, based on the clinician inputs; and

code for transferring the prosthesis instructions to a recipient computer for performance of the one or more tests.

71. The computer program of claim 70 further comprising code for receiving test results from the recipient computer.

72. The computer program of claim 71 further comprising code for presenting the test results to the clinician for analysis.

73. The computer program of any one of claims 70 to 72, wherein the code for receiving the clinician inputs comprises code for implementing a graphical user interface.

74. A computer program product comprising a computer program in accordance with any one of claims 62 to 73.

75. A computer program element comprising computer program code means to make a computer execute a procedure to conduct one or more tests on a hearing prosthesis, the computer program element being operable at least in part by the recipient of the hearing prosthesis, the computer program element further comprising:

computer program code means for generating instructions to the prosthesis in carrying out a test;

computer program code means for transferring the instructions to the prosthesis;

computer program code means for implementing an interface that allows the recipient to at least partially control at least some aspect of the tests performed on the prosthesis.

76. The computer program element of claim 75 further comprising computer program code means for receiving test results from the prosthesis.

77. The computer program element of claim 76 further comprising computer program code means for forwarding test results received from the prosthesis for immediate assessment by a clinician.

78. The computer program element of claim 76 or claim 77 further comprising computer program code means for storing test results for later assessment.

79. The computer program element of claim 78 wherein the computer program code means for storing the test results is operable to store the test results on a portable storage means for forwarding to the clinician of the recipient.

80. The computer program element of claim 79 wherein the portable storage means is in the prosthesis.

81. The computer program element of any one of claims 75 to 80 further comprising computer program code means for obtaining software instructions from the hearing prosthesis.

82. The computer program element of any one of claims 75 to 81 further comprising computer program code means for delivering test results electronically to a computer of a clinician of the recipient.

83. A computer readable medium having recorded thereon the computer program of any one of claims 62 to 73.